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July 17, 2013

Via ECFS

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: CC Docket No. 00-257 - Notification Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 64.1120 for
Birch Communications, Inc. and Ernest Communications, Inc.**

Dear Secretary Dortch:

Birch Communications, Inc. ("BCI"), on behalf of itself and the subsidiaries noted below (collectively, "Birch"), and Ernest Communications, Inc., on behalf of itself and its subsidiary Ernest Communications of Virginia, Inc. (collectively, "Ernest") (Birch and Ernest collectively, the "Applicants"), hereby notify the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 64.1120(e)(1) of the pending transfer of certain Ernest customers to Birch.

Parties to the Transaction: The Applicants filed a request for approval of the transfer of certain assets and customers of Ernest to Birch.

The following entities are involved in this transaction:

Ernest Communications, Inc.
Ernest Communications of Virginia, Inc.

Birch Communications, Inc.
Birch Telecom of Kansas, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of Missouri, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of Oklahoma, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of Texas LTD LLP dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of the Great Lakes, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of the South, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Telecom of the West, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Communications of the Northeast, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Birch Communications of Virginia, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Ionex Communications, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Ionex Communications South, Inc. dba Birch Communications
Ionex Communications North, Inc. dba Birch Communications

Type of Telecommunications Services Provided to Affected Subscribers: Ernest provides interstate telecommunications services to its subscribers. The customer transfer involves customers currently receiving services in all 50 states with the exception of Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, South Dakota, and the District of Columbia.

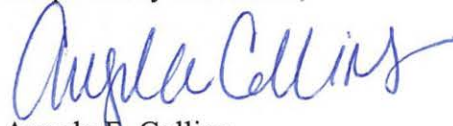
Planned Date of Transfer: Ernest subscribers will be transferred on or around September 1, 2013.

Certification of Compliance: Birch hereby certifies that it will comply with the requirement to provide advance notice to affected Ernest subscribers in accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 64.1120(e)(3), with the obligations specified in that notice as applicable, and with the other statutory and Commission requirements that apply to this streamlined process. Please see the attached verification.

Copy of Notice To Be Sent to Affected Subscribers: Drafts of the notices to be sent to affected subscribers are attached. Please note that there are specific customer notice drafts for use in the states of Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, and Tennessee that comply with 47 C.F.R. § 64.1120 and applicable customer notice requirements in those states. Customers in all other states included in the transaction will receive the same notice in compliance with 47 C.F.R. § 64.1120.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



Angela E. Collins
Counsel for Birch Communications, Inc.

Attachments

Verification

I, Christopher J. Bunce, Senior Vice President, Legal, General Counsel of Birch Communications, Inc., Birch Telecom, Inc., and their subsidiaries hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the statements in the foregoing filing are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date:

7-16-13

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christopher J. Bunce", is written over a horizontal line.

Christopher J. Bunce
Senior Vice President, Legal, General Counsel



IMPORTANT NOTICE
REGARDING A CHANGE IN YOUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Dear _____

Birch Communications ("Birch") and Ernest Communications ("Ernest") are pleased to announce that Birch is acquiring Ernest's local telephone and long distance telephone customers, as well as certain other customers receiving additional types of services from Ernest. Subject to approval by the Federal Communications Commission and state regulators as necessary, Birch will replace Ernest as your current telecommunications service provider on or after **[30 DAYS AFTER LETTER DATE]**, 2013 (the "Transfer Date"). As a result of this transaction, Birch will assume responsibility for all services previously provided to you by Ernest. Birch is excited about the opportunity to provide your telecommunications service(s) and looks forward to a long and mutually rewarding business relationship.

Please rest assured, the transition will have little or no impact on your current services, nor will there be any interruption of your service. The agreement between Birch and Ernest has been structured so that the transfer of service will be virtually seamless, other than the possibility of a minor change to your voice mail service for which you will receive additional information.¹ There, however, may be other changes to your service plan based on Birch's unique billing systems (e.g., customers currently utilizing a message or measured local service plan may be switched to a flat rate plan). In those cases, Birch will transition you in a neutral manner **with no increase to your regular monthly recurring charges**. You will retain all other service rates, features, terms, and conditions of service and your telephone number. Birch will not impose any charges for the transfer of your services to Birch and **no action is required from you to continue your telecommunications service(s) with Birch**. You will receive your first billing statement from Birch starting with your **[MONTH] 2013** or **[MONTH] 2013** bill.

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As in the past, you are responsible for paying all bills rendered to you by Ernest during the transition of service.²

You do have the right to select a different carrier for your telecommunications service(s). If you choose to switch to an alternate carrier for services, you may incur a fee from that alternate carrier for the transfer of services to that alternate carrier. If you select a local telephone service provider other than Birch, you should also contact your current long distance provider to ensure that your current long distance plan is not changed. Please note that if you are a customer of Ernest on the Transfer Date as set forth above, your account will automatically be transferred to Birch. In addition, should you have a term commitment with Ernest and you disconnect or transfer services to another carrier prior to the end of that term, you will be liable to Birch for any applicable early termination charges, subject to applicable law. Please note that when your service is transferred to Birch, any preferred carrier "freeze" you have placed on your existing telephone lines to prevent unauthorized transfer of your services to another carrier will be over-ridden for purposes of this transaction and will need to be reinstated by you by contacting Birch after the transfer is complete.

If you have any questions regarding this transaction or questions about your service or billing prior to the Transfer Date set forth above, you should contact Ernest at **800-456-8353**.

If you have any questions regarding this transaction, or questions about your service or billing after the Transfer Date set forth above, you should contact Birch at **888-772-4724**.³

Ernest thanks you for your business and Birch looks forward to providing you with quality service for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Ernest Communications and
Birch Communications

² Those customers interested in setting up online payments will be pleased to know Birch offers online payments and account updates.

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You do have the right to select a different carrier for your telecommunications service(s). If you do not wish to receive service from Birch, you should select and contact an alternate carrier directly to arrange to transfer your service before **[20 DAYS BEFORE TRANSFER DATE]**. If you choose to switch to an alternate carrier for services, you may incur a fee from that alternate carrier for the transfer of services to that alternate carrier. If you select a local telephone service provider other than Birch, you should also contact your current long distance provider to ensure that your current long distance plan is not changed. Please note that if you are a customer of Ernest on the Transfer Date as set forth above, your account will automatically be transferred to Birch. In addition, should you have a term commitment with Ernest and you disconnect or transfer services to another carrier prior to the end of that term, you will be liable to Birch for any applicable early termination charges, subject to applicable law. Please note that when your service is transferred to Birch, any preferred carrier "freeze" you have placed on your existing telephone lines to prevent unauthorized transfer of your services to another carrier will be over-ridden for purposes of this transaction and will need to be reinstated by you by contacting Birch after the transfer is complete.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE
REGARDING A CHANGE IN YOUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Dear _____

Birch Communications of the South ("Birch") and Ernest Communications ("Ernest") are pleased to announce that Birch is acquiring Ernest's local telephone and long distance telephone customers, as well as certain other customers receiving additional types of services from Ernest. Subject to approval by the Federal Communications Commission and state regulators as necessary, Birch will replace Ernest as your current telecommunications service provider on or after **[30 DAYS AFTER LETTER DATE]**, 2013 (the "Transfer Date"). As a result of this transaction, Birch will assume responsibility for all services previously provided to you by Ernest. Birch is excited about the opportunity to provide your telecommunications service(s) and looks forward to a long and mutually rewarding business relationship.

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the transition of service.² Birch is required to advise you that if Birch changes any rates within ninety (90) days following the transfer of your service, Birch will provide you with a notice of the rate change thirty (30) days prior to the change date.

You do have the right to select a different carrier for your telecommunications service(s). If you choose to switch to an alternate carrier for services, you may incur a fee from that alternate carrier for the transfer of services to that alternate carrier. If you select a local telephone service provider other than Birch, you should also contact your current long distance provider to ensure that your current long distance plan is not changed. Please note that if you are a customer of Ernest on the Transfer Date as set forth above, your account will automatically be transferred to Birch. In addition, should you have a term commitment with Ernest and you disconnect or transfer services to another carrier prior to the end of that term, you will be liable to Birch for any applicable early termination charges, subject to applicable law. Please note that when your service is transferred to Birch, any preferred carrier "freeze" you have placed on your existing telephone lines to prevent unauthorized transfer of your services to another carrier will be over-ridden for purposes of this transaction and will need to be reinstated by you by contacting Birch after the transfer is complete.

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If you have any questions regarding this transaction, or questions about your service or billing after the Transfer Date set forth above, you should contact Birch at **888-772-4724**.³

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Sincerely,

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Birch Communications of the South

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